

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4421

S E C R E T LA PAZ 6429

EXDIS

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BL

SUBJ: GUARANTEEING BOLIVIAN NEUTRALITY

REF: STATE 210975

1. I APPRECIATE THE THOUGHTFUL COMMENTS REFTEL RE
PRES BANZER'S DESIRE OBTAIN SOME SORT OF STATEMENT
FROM USG GUARANTEEING TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF BOLIVIA.

2. I BELIEVE WE CAN CONVEY A MESSAGE TO PRES BANZER
ALONG THE LINES OF YOUR CABLE THAT WILL HAVE DESIRED
EFFECTS WITHOUT PLACING USG IN POSITION OF MAKING A
GUARANTEE OF BOLIVIA'S NEUTRALITY. I SUGGEST DEPT
CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING PROPOSED TEXT OF A LETTER FROM
PRES FORD TO PRES BANZER:

QUOTE DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: AMBASSADOR STEDMAN
HAD TOLD ME OF YOUR CONCERN OVER THE POSSIBLE INVOLVE-
MENT OF BOLIVIAN TERRITORY IN THE EVENT OF ARMED CONFLICT
BETWEEN PERU AND CHILE. THAT CONCERN IS SHARED BY MY
GOVERNMENT, AS IT SURELY MUST BE BY ALL SIGNATORS OF
THE 1947 INTER-AMERICAN TREATY OF RECIPROCAL ASSISTANCE
(RIO TREATY), GIVEN THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 6 OF THAT
TREATY.

MY GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN NOTE OF THE PUBLIC STATEMENTS
OF THE HEAD OF GOVERNMENT IN PERU AND CHILE THAT NEITHER
STATE CONTEMPLATES MILITARY ACTION AGAINST THE OTHER.

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NEVERTHELESS, RAPID ARMS BUILD-UPS NATURALLY RAISE QUESTIONS

CONCERNING THE INTENT BEHIND SUCH ARMING AND RAISE QUESTIONS AS TO WHAT MEASURES OR GUARANTEES THE MEMBERS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMUNITY COULD ADOPT TO HELP DISSOLVE THE TENSIONS THAT APPEAR TO BE DEVELOPING BETWEEN THOSE SISTER REPUBLICS. I BELIEVE THAT WE MUST AGAIN PLACE SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON STRENGTHENING THOSE PORTIONS OF THE RIO TREATY THAT CONCERN THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY OF THE CONTINENT. AN APPROPRIATE FORUM FOR THIS MIGHT BE THE MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS (MFM) NEXT MARCH IN BUENOS AIRES. AT THAT TIME, THE NATIONS OF THE HEMISPHERE SHOULD ALSO BE PREPARED TO SUPPORT A REGIONAL ARMS LIMITATION CONFERENCE, SO THAT WITH RENEWED SELF-SSURANCE STEMMING FROM A REGIONAL AGREEMENT ON ARMS LIMITATIONS, THE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION COULD DEVOTE A GREATER SHARE OF THEIR GOVERNMENTAL REVENUE TO INVESTMENT IN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

IF YOUR GOVERNMENT WERE TO PLACE THE TWO ITEMS ABOVE, WHICH ARE OF COURSE INTERRELATED, ON THE MFM AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION, MY GOVERNMENT WOULD BE PREPARED TO CO-SPONSOR, OR JOIN WITH OTHERS IN SUPPORTING YOUR INITIATIVE. WE ARE ALSO PREPARED, OF COURSE, TO HOLD PRE-CONFERENCE CONSULTATIONS WITH OTHER RIO TREATY MEMBERS ON THESE POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS.

I WOULD BE MOST PLEASED TO HAVE YOUR VIEWS ON THESE SUGGESTIONS. UNQUOTE.

3. PRES BANZER ALSO DISCUSSED WHAT HE TERMED THE MINIMUM MILITARY CAPABILITY FOR BOLIVIA TO DEFEND ITS BORDERS IN EVENT IT WAS INVOLVED IN A PERUVIAN-CHILEAN CONFLICT. WHILE WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT HE HAS IN MIND, THE DEPT MAY WISH TO CONSIDER WHETHER TO DUCK THIS OVERTURE OR TO AUTHORIZE US TO INQUIRE FURTHER. NEW EQUIPMENT WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE HIGH ON HIS PRIORITY LIST.

4. WHILE I RECOGINIZE THAT THE IDEA OF A REGIONAL PROJECT IN ARICA HAS BEEN CONSIDERED BEFORE, IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO REVIEW IT AGAIN. BOLIVIA DESPERATELY NEEDS EXPANDED PORT FACILITIES. PERU AND CHILE MIGHT VIEW FAVORABLY IDB OR VENEZUELAN FINANCING OF A REGIONAL PROJECT WITH SUPPORT FROM THE US AND KEY LATIN NATIONS. A PROPOSAL FOR THE PROJECT MIGHT GIVE PERU AND CHILE A CONSTRUCTIVE AND

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POSITIVE MATTER TO WORK ON, POSSIBLY IMPROVING THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARDS ONE ANOTHER.

4. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO HAVE A REPLY RELATIVELY SOON EVEN IF ONLY A TEMPORIZING ONE SO THAT I COULD REASSURE THE PRESIDENT THAT HIS REQUEST IS RECEIVING HIGH-LEVEL USG CONSIDERATIONS.

STEDMAN

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